

Perseverance of the Saints

A. Defined:

Seen from **our** perspective, true saints will persevere to the end and be finally saved.

We will believe through death, for no one is saved without faith at death.

Seen from **God's** perspective, He will preserve all those elected from eternity for eternity.

He will complete the work He began.

If you have salvation, you'll never lose it.

If you lost it, you never had it.

Accompanying phrases:

“Once saved always saved.”

“Eternal security”

“Assurance of salvation”

The Arminian perspective: “It is not altogether certain that salvation can not be forfeited.”

B. The challenge:

Making sense of the:

Verses indicating perseverance

Verses indicating forfeiting

Option 1: It just isn't clear. We can't tell definitively from the biblical texts whether or not you can lose your salvation. (Sometimes it's OK to say you don't know.)

Option 2: The verses promising perseverance can't be trusted because the warnings prove you can lose your salvation.

Option 3: The verses promising perseverance are trustworthy, and the warnings must be taken seriously.

C. The Resolution:

Why should we have confidence in the promises? We can't make any sense of them IF we can lose our salvation.

1. If man chooses of his own free will, then it makes sense that he could just as easily “unchoose” and fall away. BUT, If “T” then “P”. Total depravity proves our salvation is a choice of God to spiritually raise us for the display of His glory and power. Nothing can thwart God's purpose. Our salvation is for God's glory and nothing will rob God of His glory. (Eph.2:4-10: union with Christ...display of His grace...His workmanship)
2. The Lord is for me. (Ps. 118:6; Rom.8:32f)
3. We are sealed with the Spirit as a pledge (Eph.1:13-14; 2 Cor.1:22)

4. Jesus is the author and finisher of our faith (Heb.12:1-2; Phil.1:6,3:12; 1 Cor.1:8-9)
5. We are the work of God (Phil.2:13; 1 Peter 5:10,1:5; 2 Thess.3:3; 1 Cor.10:13; 2 Tim.4:18; Jer.32:40; Phil.3:20-21)
6. Christ actually (not theoretically) redeemed us from the curse (Gal.3:13; John 6:37, 39; 10:28-29; Heb.10:14)

D. Objections

1. Can't Christians backslide? (Who's asking the question?)
2. Are there in fact phony professions of faith? (visible/invisible church) 2 Tim.3:5; Matt.7:21; James 2:14f; 2 Peter 2:21.
3. "If you...." Passages (Col.1:23) We are in fact commanded to hold fast because we must hold fast (Heb.3:6, 14; 4:14; 10:23)
4. Those who apparently have fallen away (Gal.5:4; Heb.6:6)